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Standard-Times



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LOCAL, 5A

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Double honor for Citizen of Year

Teamwork earns couple chamber award

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The 2013 Citizen of the Year is not a person, but a married couple.

Mary and Nathaniel "Hank" Hankins are so inseparable that the San Angelo Chamber of Commerce bestowed the honor upon both.

"Their efforts are day-in

and day-out," said Gary Cox, president and chief executive officer of Texas Bank. "They really are a team."

State Rep. Drew Darby made the presentation at the end of the Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet Tuesday.

"Imagine a person who had been involved with politics, military, church, business, schools, youth. Imagine a person who has touched other lives through counseling, marriages, religion, hunger, recreation, teaching," Darby said,

His list went on, detailing many achievements. "You might ask, how can one person have done so much? Well, one person could not ... but two people could."

About 400 people — from city and county officials and local law enforcement to state and federal officials and local business leaders — attended the event to honor local talent and residents who have had an effect on the community.

"It's community

See CITIZEN, 6A



Mary and Nathaniel "Hank" Hankins "have shared a lifetime of godliness, love, compassion and service," State Rep. Drew Darby said while announcing that they are 2013 Citizen of the Year.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CITIZEN from 1A

impact," said chamber President Phil Neighbors. "The community will be very excited" about the honorees.

Others honored at the banquet include Kinney Franke Architects, whose members were recognized for their innovation; San Angelo's outgoing Bishop Michael Pfeifer, who received the Chairman's Award; and local organizations Grace and Grub and Rust Street Ministries.

Cox is a past recipient and a member of the Citizen of the Year selection committee, which makes its picks without influence from the chamber. Cox said the selection was a challenge because there were so many qualified candidates.

"There's always a discussion about some very qualified people who someday will be recognized," Cox said. "They've both done so much for the community. ... They've inspired so many others to participate."

The Hankinses moved to San Angelo in the 1960s while stationed at Goodfellow Air Force Base. After he retired, Hank Hankins attended St. Mary's University and returned to work

for Ethicon.

He became the City Council's first black member in 1993, representing Single Member District 1. During his term he decided he wanted to dedicate his life to ministry and, after attending theology school, became a minister.

"These two people have shared a lifetime of godliness, love, compassion and service," Darby said of the Hankinses.

Like her husband, Mary Hankins also was called to ministry. While living as a military wife in the Philippines, she was so moved when she saw children digging for food in the trash that she dedicated 30 years to feeding people at Wesley Trinity Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, where she was director.

The Hankinses are "very deserving," said Mark McLaughlin, a selection committee member. "She's like an angel from God."

Brian May, president of Angelo State University and committee member, has known the couple for some time and said that — in addition to their warm and genuine personalities — the couple gives great hugs.

"They represent what's good about West Texas," May said. "They exude that love. They spent their

entire lifetime helping others."

The couple have a lengthy list of achievements, including founding the Concerned Citizens of San Angelo — an organization that helps local youths — hosting international students from Angelo State University, representing the NAACP and being parents to two and grandparents to four.

Both have committed their lives to loving each

other, loving people in the community and helping those at the lowest socioeconomic level of society, May said. Despite their long list of achievements, however, he said the Hankinses are modest.

"Their combined life story embodies the scripture of a servant's heart in Philippians," Darby said. "...Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."

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